



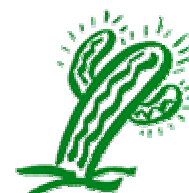
## LOCATION AND HISTORY

The City of El Paso is located at the westernmost tip of the state of Texas on the United States border with Mexico. Founded over four centuries ago as an outpost for traders and missionaries in the West, El Paso has been a dynamic city for over four hundred years. Situated south of the state line of New Mexico and north of the international boundary with Mexico, El Paso wraps around the southern tip of the Franklin Mountain Range, the southernmost point of the Rocky Mountain chain. The international boundary between the United States and Mexico bisects the downtown areas of the City of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Literally translated, El Paso means “The Pass”, which is a name well suited for the lowest altitude all-weather pass through the Rocky Mountains. Of the many things that make El Paso special - its diverse economy, unique cultural blend, and mild climate make it a great place to live and work.



Since the appearance of the first Europeans on the North American Continent, El Paso has been a major crossroads for continental north-south and east-west traffic. The most significant account of a crossing was written by Captain Antonio de Espejo, renowned for naming New Mexico, on November 11, 1583, when he and his party camped between what is now downtown El Paso and the Cordova Island Bridge. Espejo wrote in his journal about the Gorge at the Curves (La Barranca de Las Vueltas) a site that has been identified as being located at the western edge of the University of Texas at El Paso Campus. This date is the one most frequently cited as official evidence of an El Paso crossing, though many historians that believe Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca visited El Paso in 1536.

In January of 1598 Juan de Oñate, with 83 ox-drawn wagons and carts and over 500 men, women, and children, set out on the first major colonization effort of the new world. The expedition began in a village south of Chihuahua, Mexico and headed towards the frontier regions of New Spain, present-day West Texas and New Mexico. On April 20, after traveling for four months across a 325-mile stretch of desert, the exhausted travelers finally reached the cooling waters of the Rio Grande in the vicinity of modern day El Paso. On April 30, 1598, after ten days of resting and feasting, the Oñate expedition gathered in their finest clothing to commemorate their gratitude with a day of thanksgiving. This event took place twenty-two years before the Pilgrims set sail from England to land on Plymouth Rock.





In 1659, the first permanent European settlement was established in the Valley, and the Mission of Guadalupe was erected. The Mission still stands in the central square of the City of Juarez, Mexico. Other historic missions located in El Paso County are, the Ysleta del Sur, Socorro, and San Elizario Missions. The Ysleta mission was founded over 300 years ago and the Socorro Mission was built in 1682. These two missions are both registered in the National Register of Historic Places. The San Elizario Mission was erected in 1780 as a presidio (Spanish Fort) and was later converted to a mission.

The United States established the first army post in the region in 1854. Since that time, Fort Bliss has continued to be a highly strategic military installation. Fort Bliss was named after Colonel William Wallace Smith Bliss who died of yellow fever in New Orleans in 1853. Bliss, and his mentor General Zachary Taylor, was a hero of the Mexican American War (1846-1848). William W. S. Bliss married General Taylor's only surviving daughter, Elizabeth. Taylor's other daughter Sara Knox Taylor had tragically died two months after her marriage to Jefferson Davis who later became President of the Confederacy during the Civil War. After the President's untimely death in 1850 Bliss served in New Orleans until his own death in 1853. In 1955 Bliss' body was excavated in New Orleans and re-interred at the Ft. Bliss National Cemetery

Source: Old Ft. Bliss Museum The American President Website:  
[www.americanpresident.org/presbios/presbios.htm](http://www.americanpresident.org/presbios/presbios.htm)

## THE RIO GRANDE

The Rio Grande serves as a significant part of the international boundary between the City of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. The Rio Grande means "big river" in English, but today it hardly depicts the image that the name conjures up due to the many dams that have been built along it for irrigation. The river was once a sprawling three-mile wide body of water dotted with an estimated three hundred islands. The survey of the river took eight years to complete and resulted in the deaths of several surveyors. Both countries had disputed the location of the international boundary between the United States and Mexico since the end of the Mexican American War in 1848. In June 1962, President John F. Kennedy initiated talks with President Lopez Mateos of Mexico and determined that relations with Mexico would not improve until the disputed location of the international boundary was resolved. Realigning the border, relocating homes, businesses, schools, and giving up portions of railroad tracks were the larger issues confronted by diplomats during the implementation of the Chamizal Convention in 1969. Through this convention Mexico received 437 acres of land (and all attachments) from the United States, and the border dispute was officially settled. Much of the disputed area on both sides of the border was made into parkland. The U.S. National Parks Service maintains the Chamizal Park on the U.S. side and it plays host to a variety of community events during the year including the Border Film Festival and the summer concert series, Music Under the Stars.

Metz, Leon C.  
Border: *The*  
U.S. *Mexico*  
Line. Mangan  
Books, El Paso,  
TX, 1989.  
Metz Leon C.  
City at the  
Pass: *An*  
Illustrated  
History of El  
Paso. Windsor  
Publications:  
Woodland CA,  
1980. El Paso  
Mission Trail  
Association.

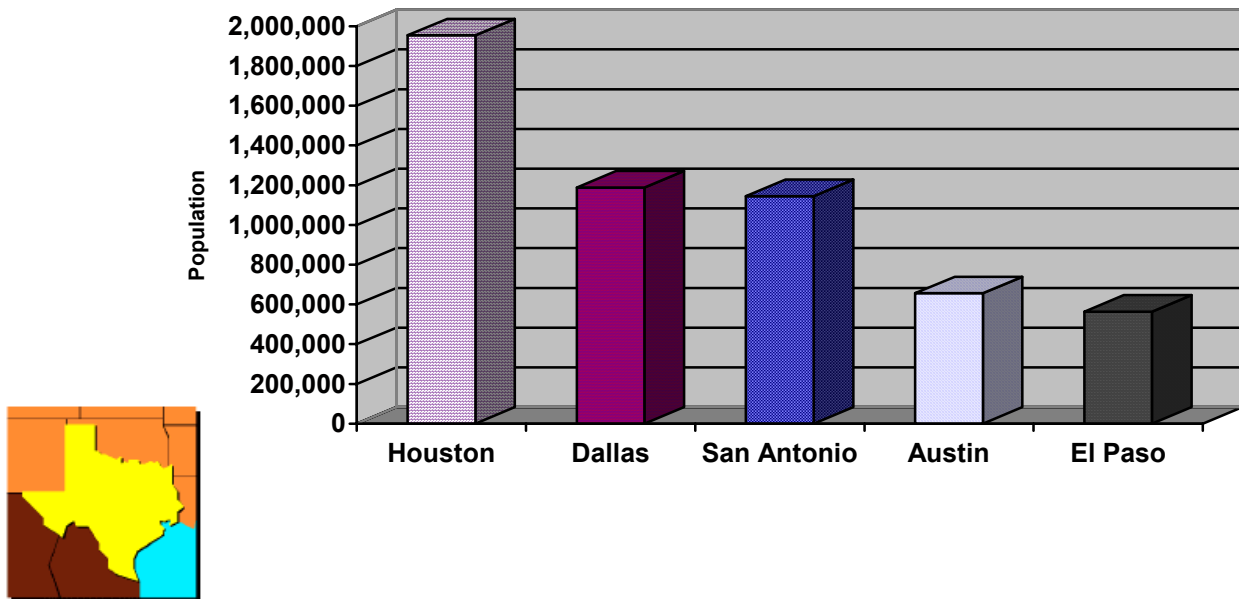
## POPULATION

The City of El Paso (Population: 563,662) is the fifth largest city in the state of Texas and the twenty-third largest city in the United States. The 2000 census population figures represent a 9.4 percent increase from those reported by the 1990 census. El Paso's sister city, Ciudad Juarez, Mexico (Population: 1,217,818) is the largest city in the state of Chihuahua and the fifth largest city in Mexico. Viewed as a whole this binational metropolitan region includes 1,897,440 residents.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2000 Data, released March, 2001

Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática

### The Five Largest Cities in Texas

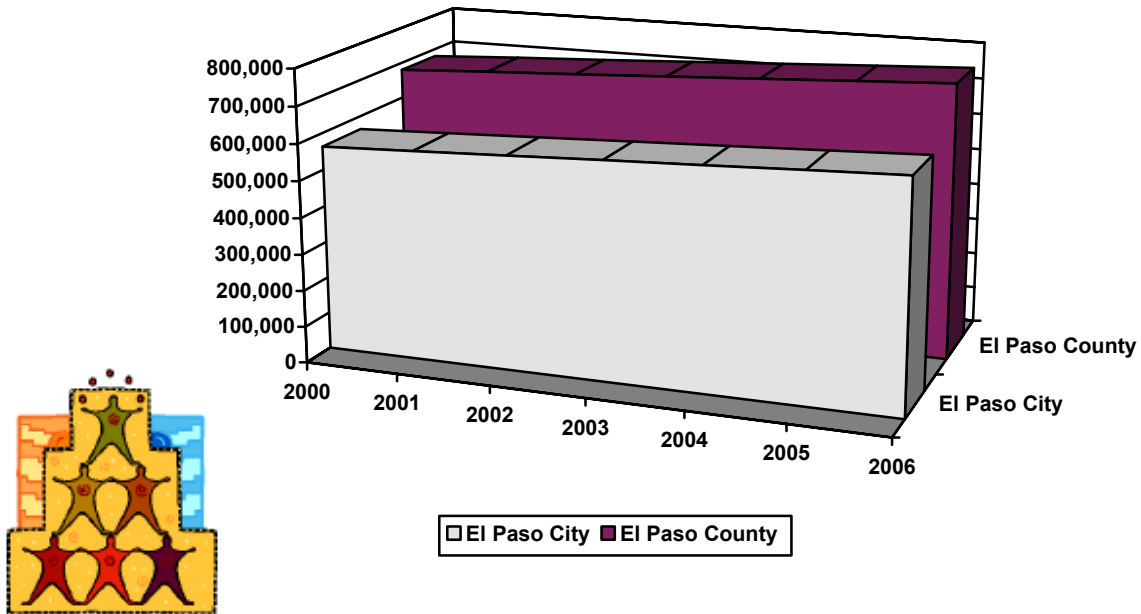


## POPULATION PROJECTION

The El Paso County Population is projected to surpass 700,000 in 2002, and the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area population is expected to reach 850,000 by 2012. The forecast is for local population to rise at a compound annual rate of 1.86 percent over the next ten years.

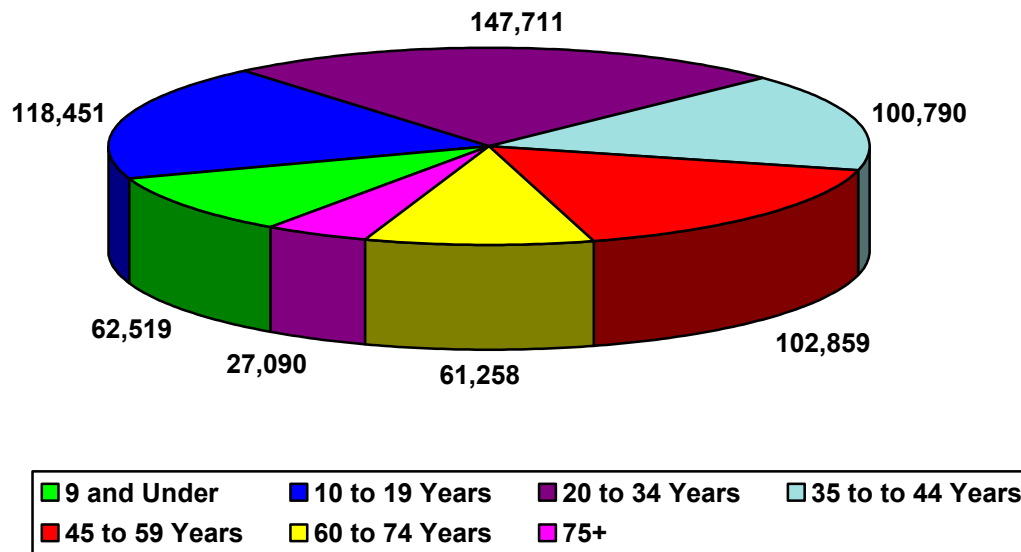
\*\*The El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area is a Single –County MSA composed entirely of El Paso County.

### Population-Projection El Paso City and County

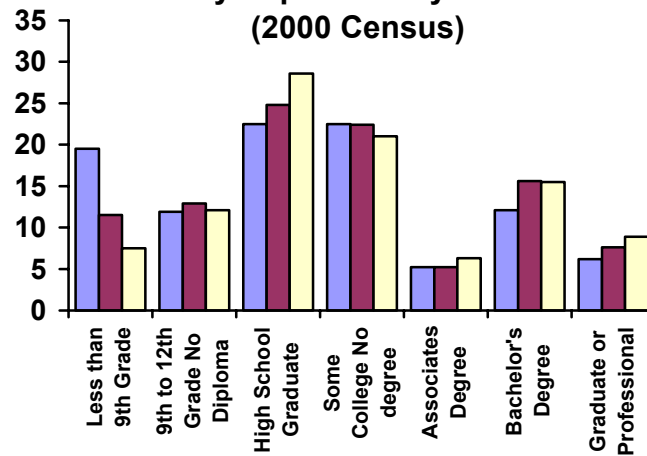


## DEMOGRAPHICS

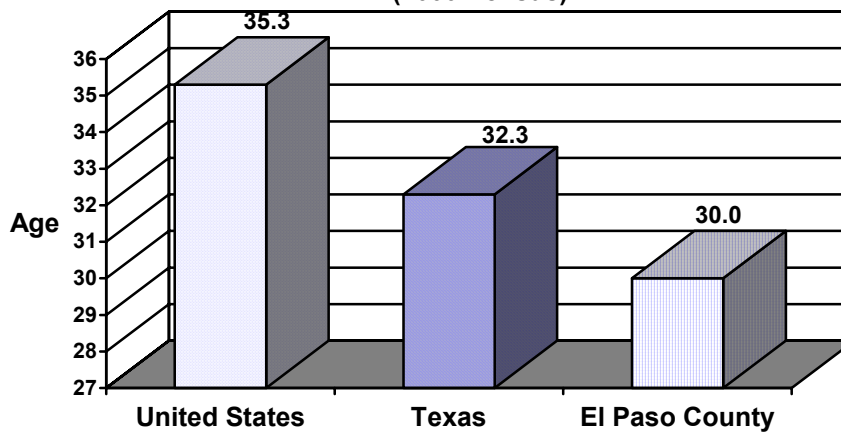
### El Paso County Population by Age Group (2000 Census)



**El Paso County Population by Education Levels  
(2000 Census)**

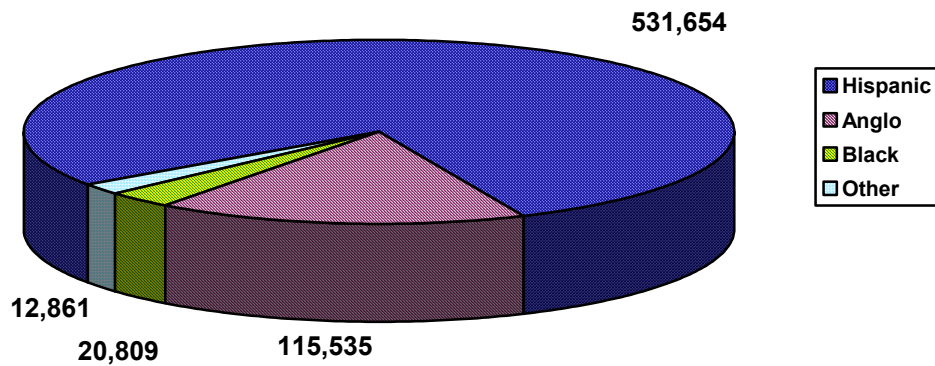


**National, State and El Paso County Median Age  
(2000 Census)**

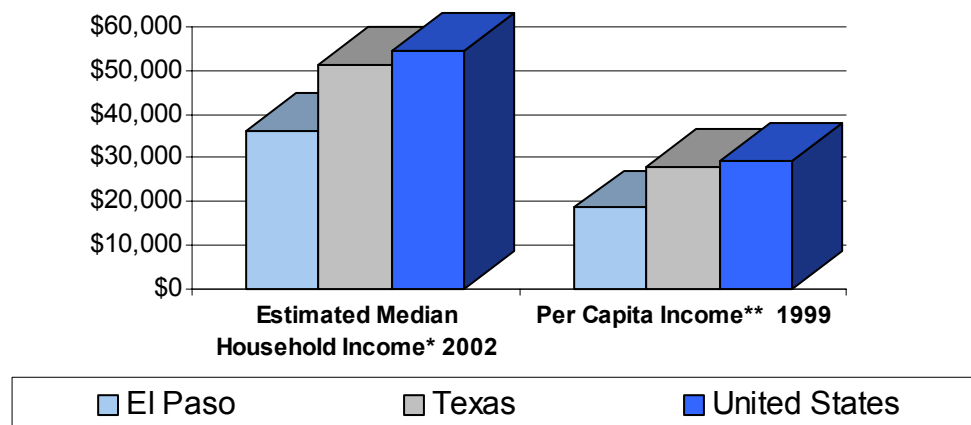


*Median Age represents point at which half the population is older the other half younger.*

### El Paso County Population by Race and Ethnicity (2000 Census)

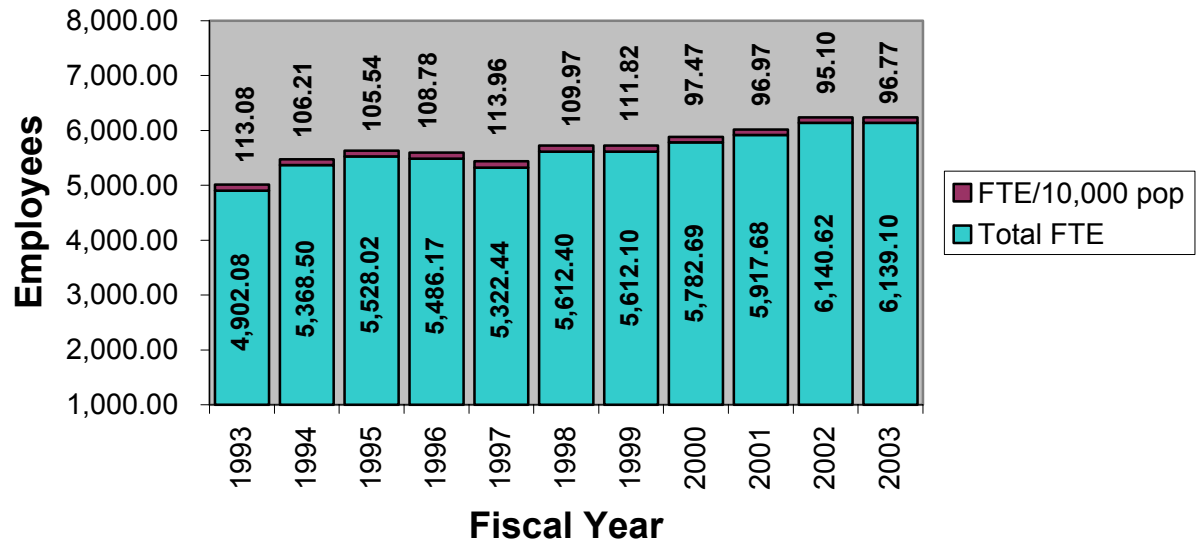


### Income Levels



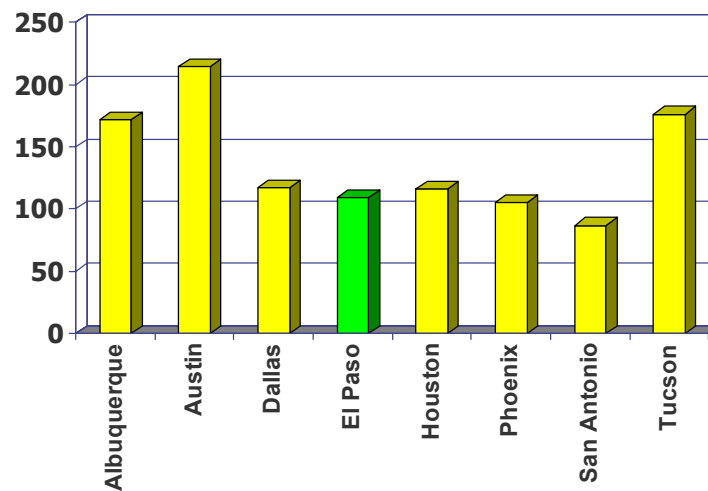
Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development, Estimated Median Family Income, 2002 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1999 levels

## City of El Paso Employees



## Comparison of Employees per 10,000

FY 2000 data for other cities



## THE ECONOMY

**E**l Paso is experiencing the arrival of the New Economy at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Two economic phenomena sweeping the world, globalization and information technology, are helping to revitalize the El Paso/Ciudad Juarez region. The first of these phenomena, globalization, and the global economy, have always been an everyday reality in the border region. In the past several years, international trade, stimulated by both NAFTA and the Mexican maquiladora program, has helped to fortify the local economy. The second of these phenomena, the ascent of information technology, is refocusing the nation towards information processing and information services as the primary sources for job creation. The City will continue to emphasize the creation of high technology jobs in order to sustain its economic growth in the future. These two primary factors have accelerated economic structural change in El Paso.

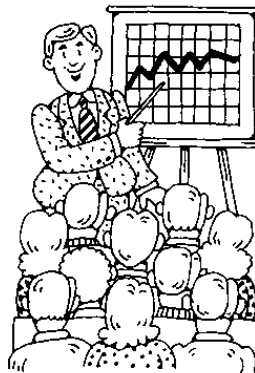
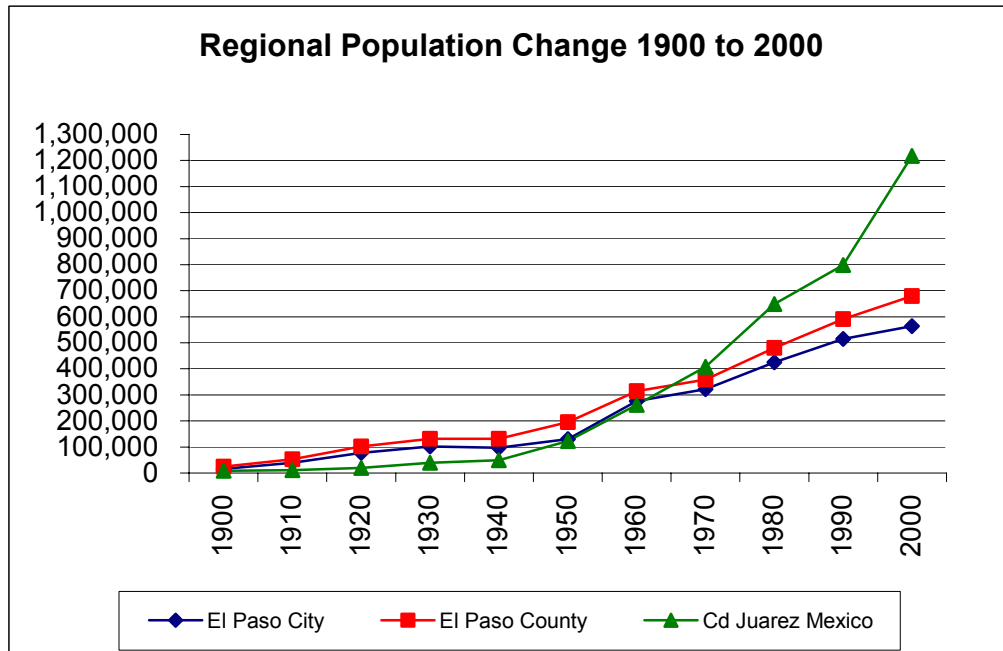
Over the last 10 years, the El Paso Civilian Labor Force has grown steadily, with more moderate growth in recent years. The “El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area Employment Trends” graph below demonstrates that the stabilization of the expanding workforce has allowed the El Paso economy to narrow the differential between the total Civilian Labor Force and number of employed persons. The total wage and salary employment for the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is expected to grow to 283,490 by 2007. As shown in “Unemployment rates,” the El Paso unemployment rate has traditionally been significantly higher than those of Texas and the United States. However, the city has reflected the national trend in decreasing unemployment, with an average rate of 8.2 percent for 2002. Recent statistics indicate that new industry, a retrained labor force, a robust economy, and investment in education and infrastructure are also beginning to alleviate area unemployment.



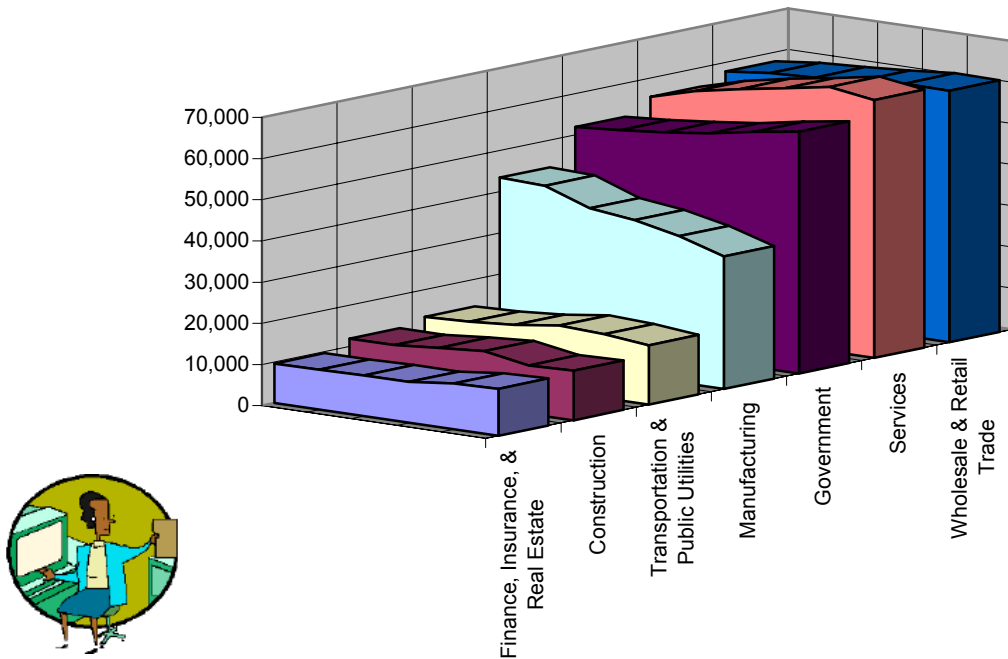
The New Economy is causing an adjustment of El Paso's employment distribution, as shown by “El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Job Growth, June 1997 - June 2002.” Once heavily dependent on manufacturing jobs, El Paso has experienced a number of changes among its various employment sectors. The service sector has seen an increase in health care, professional, and business services. This increase most likely results from a growing need for services to support the rapidly expanding border region. In contrast, manufacturing employment has decreased significantly, as a major portion of the apparel and textile industry has relocated south of the border. However, the maquiladora industry and NAFTA have created new opportunities for suppliers and higher value-added manufacturing in El Paso. As NAFTA stimulates international trade, El Paso's trade sector has remained strong throughout the recent years. Next, a large portion of the El Paso workforce is employed in the government sector for two primary reasons. A young, rapidly growing population has expanded



employment in the public school system, and El Paso's location on the border creates a need for additional federal government agencies. The transportation, communications, and public utilities employment sector is supported by the border economy as well, since El Paso's strategic location is of great benefit to telecommunications and shipping companies. Finally, the construction and finance, insurance, and real estate sectors have also been stimulated by the region's economic strengths.

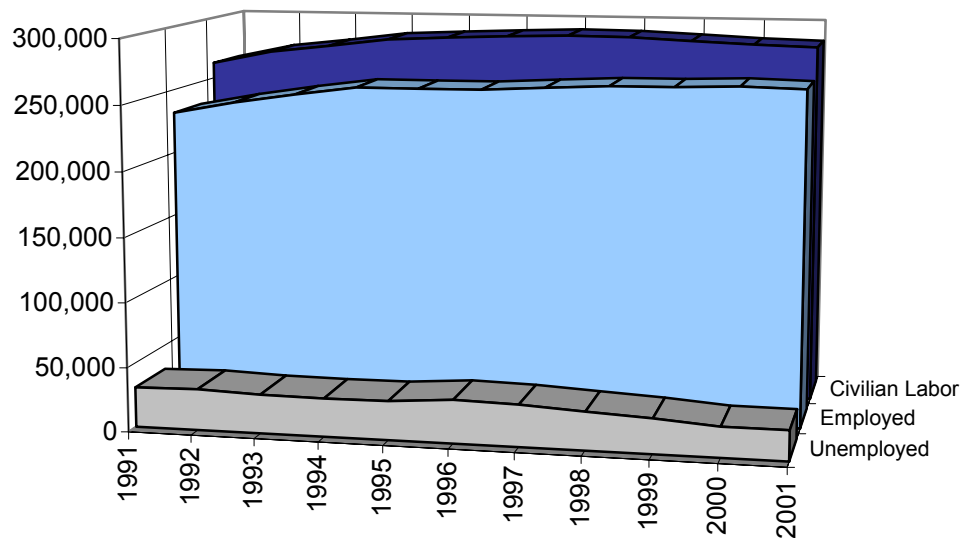


## El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Job Growth June 1997 - June 2002



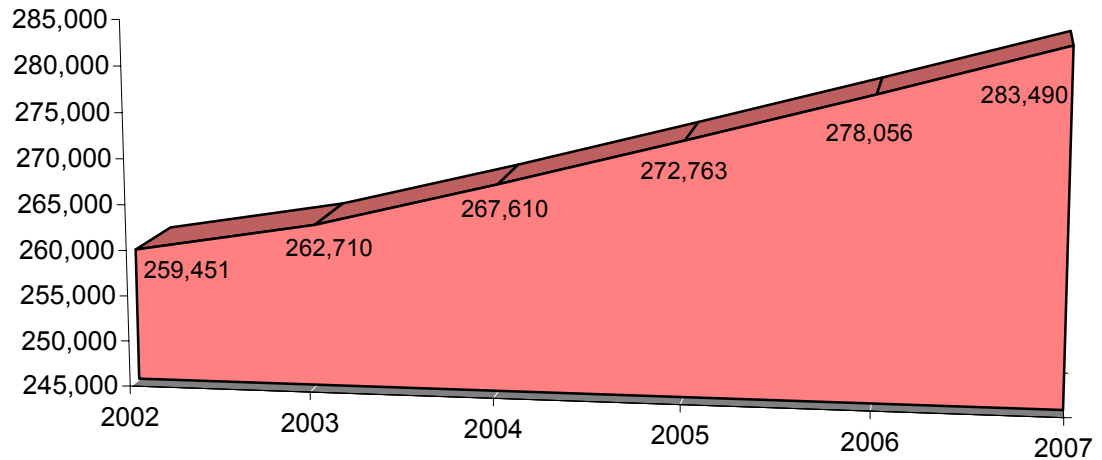
Source: Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market Information, June 2002.

## El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Employment Trends 1991 - 2001



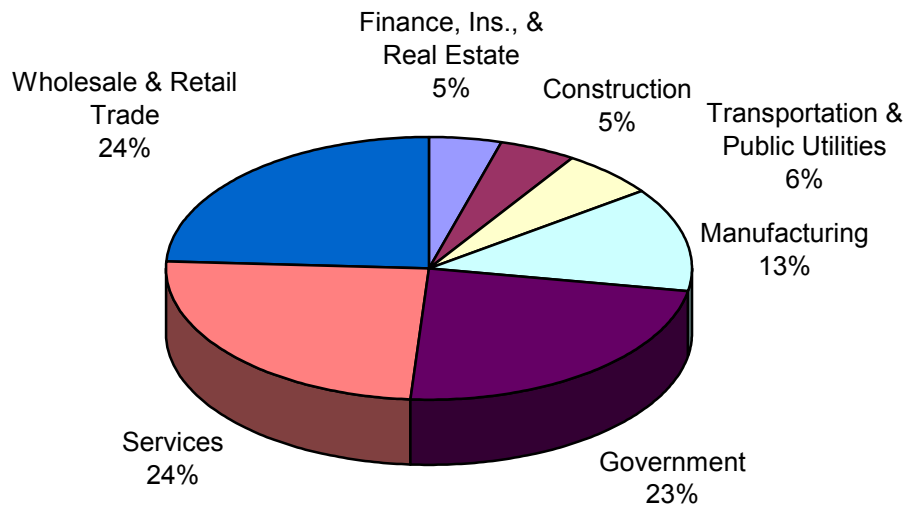
Source: Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market Information, June 2002.

## El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area Employment Projections 2002 - 2007



Source: Texas Perspectives, Inc., June 2002.

## El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area Labor Force Overview June 2002




Source: Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market Information.


## Major Economic Indicators for El Paso


	2000	2001	2002	2003
Personal Income (Millions of Dollars)	\$12,637.8	\$12,914.8	\$13,317.7	\$13,843.5
% Change	4.6%	2.2%	3.1%	3.9%
Retail Sales (Millions of Dollars)	\$6,272.7	\$6,211.6	\$6,264.1	\$6,612.5
% Change	6.6%	-1%	.8%	5.6%
Real GMP (Billions of 1996 Dollars)	\$14.211	\$14.382	\$14.506	\$14.948
% Change	3.6%	1.2%	0.9%	3%
Business Establishments (In Thousands)	12.5	12.511	12.524	12.568
% Change	1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%
Population (In Thousands)	679.622	690.484	703.679	715.501
% Change	1%	1.6%	1.9%	1.7%
Employment (In Thousands)	326.592	329.621	332.225	336.962
% Change	1.8%	0.9%	0.8%	1.4%
Employment to Population Ratio	.481	.477	.472	.471
Housing Starts (In Thousands)	3.802	3.792	3.754	4.173
% Change	-5.9%	-0.3%	-1%	11.2%
New House Prices (In Thousands)	\$95.07	\$97.542	\$99.688	\$102.28
% Change	4%	2.6%	2.2%	2.6%
International Bridge Crossings (In Millions of Persons)	55.345	47.591	47.939	48.289
% Change	4.5%	-14%	0.7%	0.7%


Source: *Border Region Modeling Project. The University of Texas at El Paso.  
Business Report SR01-2. Borderplex Economic Outlook: 2001-2003.*


## ECONOMIC INDICATORS

 Personal income is forecast to surpass \$17.56 billion by 2007, with a 5.34 percent compound annual growth rate over the next ten years. (See “El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area Personal Income.”)

 Gross Retail Sales figures reached \$6.4 billion in 2001, an increase of 8.98 percent or \$529 million since 1999. (See “El Paso Gross Retail Sales.”)

 The City of El Paso Building Permits and Inspections issued a total of 10,598 building permits, for a value of \$4.89 million in 2001. (See “City of El Paso Construction Valuations.”)

 According to the El Paso Central Appraisal District, total property valuations, before exemptions, for 2001 reached \$17.26 billion. Of this total amount for El Paso, personal property was valued at \$2.97 billion, and real property was valued at \$14.29 billion.

 Northbound crossings into El Paso from Juarez remained steady in 2001, including 7.23 million pedestrians, 695,928 freight carriers, and 16.73 million passenger carriers. (See “Northbound Crossings.”)

Source: City of El Paso Office of Economic Development

## EL PASO AT A GLANCE



The land area for the City is 250.9 square miles. The land area for the County is 1058 square miles.

The Altitude is 4,000 Square feet ASL. The latitude is 31° 45 min. 31.9 Sec. N. The Longitude is 106° 29 Min. 34.4 Sec. W.



El Paso is in the Mountain Time Zone

The average household size is 3.07. The average family size is 3.54



The average commute time is 22.4 minutes. 2.3 percent commute by bus. 15.8 percent commute through carpools.

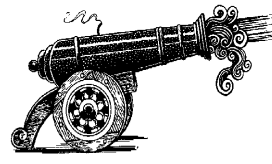


12.6 percent of the population are civilian veterans

28.7 percent of El Pasoans speak English and no other language when at home. 68.9 percent speak Spanish as their primary language within the home.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (Census 2000)

## FORT BLISS AND THE EL PASO ECONOMY

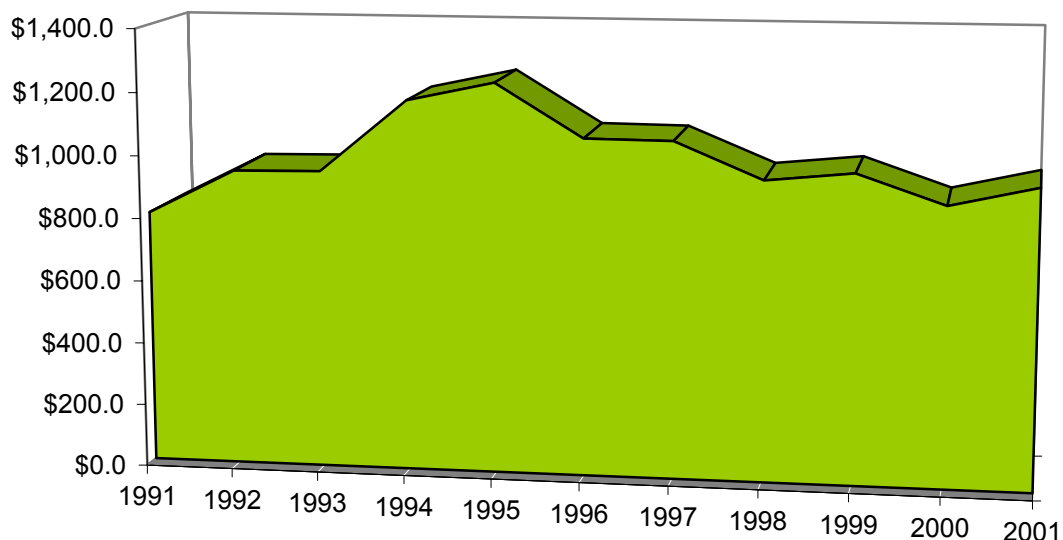


The City of El Paso is home to Fort Bliss, the largest Air Defense Artillery Training Center in the world. Since 1848, Fort Bliss has grown steadily alongside its host city. Located in the northeastern region of El Paso, Fort Bliss currently stretches over 1,119,700 acres into southern New Mexico. The base occupies an area larger than the entire state of Rhode Island.

Fort Bliss hosts "Roving Sands," the world's largest Joint Tactical Air Operations exercise that utilizes Army, Marine, and multinational air defense units to create an integrated air defense network. While the primary mission of the post is air defense, it is also home to the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Joint Task Force-6, and the William Beaumont Army Medical Center. As of June 2002, Fort Bliss supports nearly 118,923 combined military and civilian personnel. Of this total, approximately 12,453 are active duty military personnel; 33,484 are retirees; 6,788 are civilian employees; and, 66,198 are family members (active and retired).

Fort Bliss has a significant impact on the local El Paso economy, estimated at approximately \$1.7 billion in 2002. Included in this estimate are base employee salaries, retiree pensions, local contracts, and affected commerce.

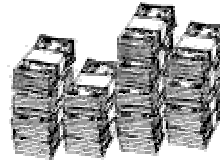
**Fort Bliss Expenditures  
Economic Impact on El Paso  
1991 - 2001**



Source: Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center, Fort Bliss, Texas.

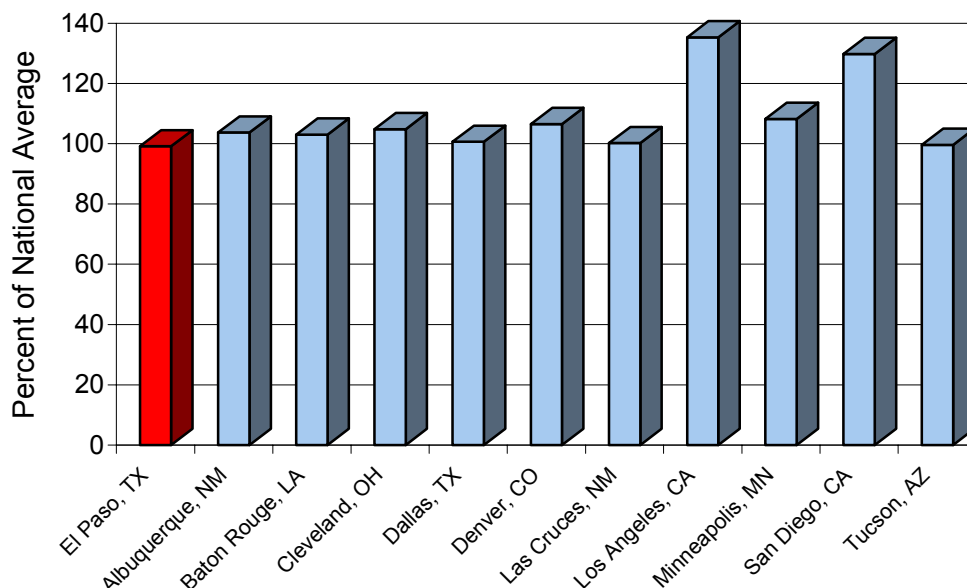
In addition, Fort Bliss is widely recognized for its excellent relations with the El Paso community. Base units participate in a variety of community programs designed to help children, promote volunteerism, and cultivate strong ties to the City. Fort Bliss units also participate in the "Partnership in Progress" program, in which local businesses form partnerships with units and formulate a learning exchange program.

## COST OF LIVING



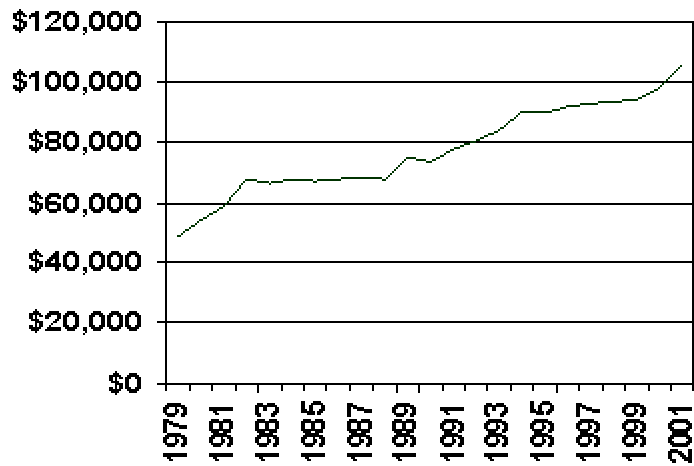
El Paso residents enjoy a relatively low cost of living compared to other cities in the United States. Combined with its growing size and numerous points of cultural and scenic interest, the El Paso area offers businesses a thriving community coupled with a pleasant and affordable cost of living. In the first quarter of 2002, the index for El Paso was at 99.1 percent of the national average of 100 percent. The graph below illustrates how El Paso's cost of living compares to other cities in the southwest.

**Cost of Living Index Comparison  
1st Quarter 2002**

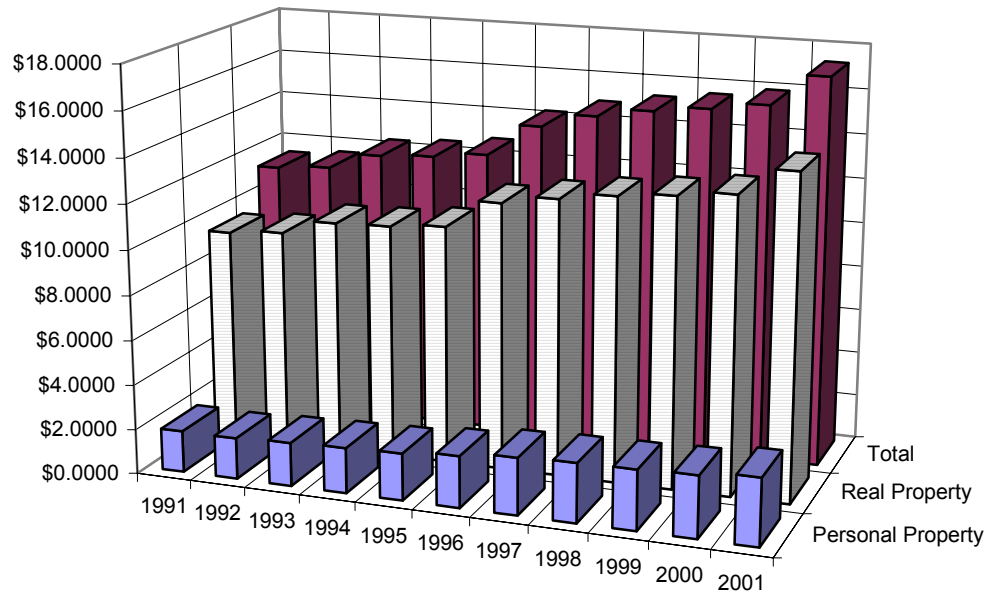


Source: ACCRA Cost of Living Index, 1st Quarter 2002

## Average Sales Price of Single-family Home, El Paso Area



## Property Valuations for The City of El Paso (After Exemptions)



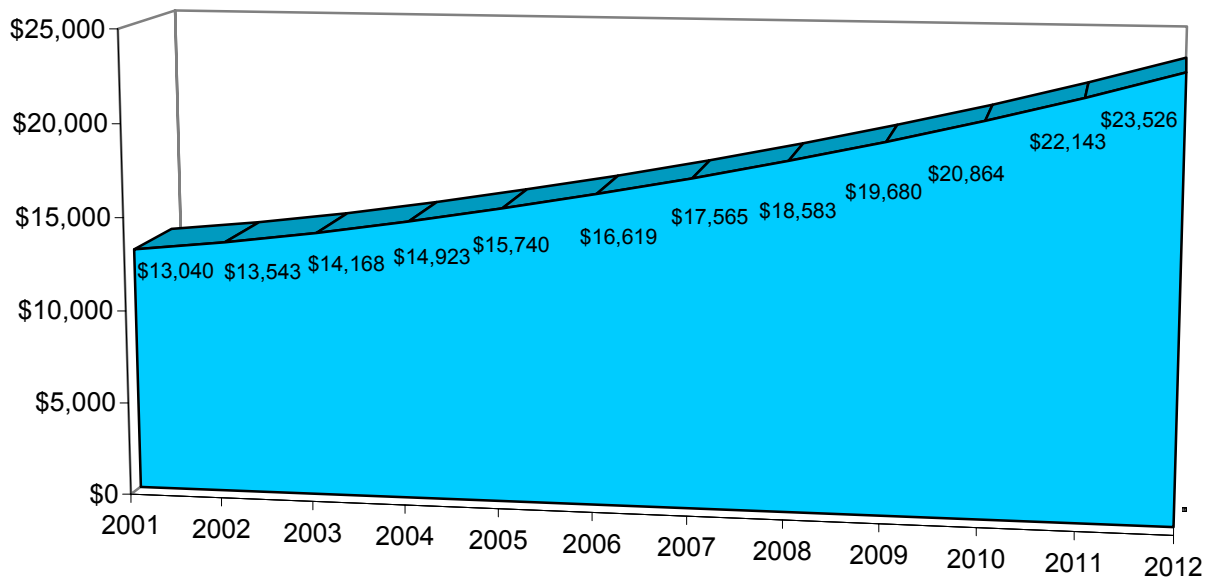
City of El Paso, Tax Office



## INCOME

A combination of increased economic activity and a growing population will drive the rate of personal income expansion, as the forecast is for a compound annual growth rate of 5.7 percent for the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area for the next ten years. In the year 2006, local personal income is expected to reach over \$16 billion. Moreover, El Paso will maintain its status as the hub of the border economy, contributing hundreds of millions per year to workers from Dona Ana and Otero Counties, as well as jobholders in Ciudad Juarez.

**El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area Personal Income  
Growth and Projections  
(in millions)  
2001 - 2012**



Source: Texas Perspectives, Inc., July 2002



## RETAIL IMPACT OF MEXICO

In late 1994, the devaluation of the Mexican peso significantly reduced retail sales figures in El Paso, especially in the Downtown area. Many analysts argue that the reduction of money spent by the City of Juarez, Mexico shoppers in El Paso further demonstrates the economic integration of the two cities. The El Paso Economic Adjustment Strategic Plan asserts that “center-city shopkeepers in El Paso reported sales losses of 50 to 70 percent immediately following the devaluation, and many believe that sales have yet to fully recover.”

Furthermore, the 1999 El Paso Economic Adjustment Strategic Plan estimates that retail demand from Mexico accounted for over 14.6 percent of taxable retail sales in El Paso County during 1998, or over \$388 million dollars. Assuming this ratio continues to be in place, the dollar volume of Mexico-based shopping would have risen to \$433 million last year. Other local economists estimate this figure to be as high as 30 percent of retail sales in El Paso. This impact is undoubtedly concentrated near the bridges and in the Downtown area; however, merchants throughout El Paso enjoy the patronage of customers from across the Rio Grande.

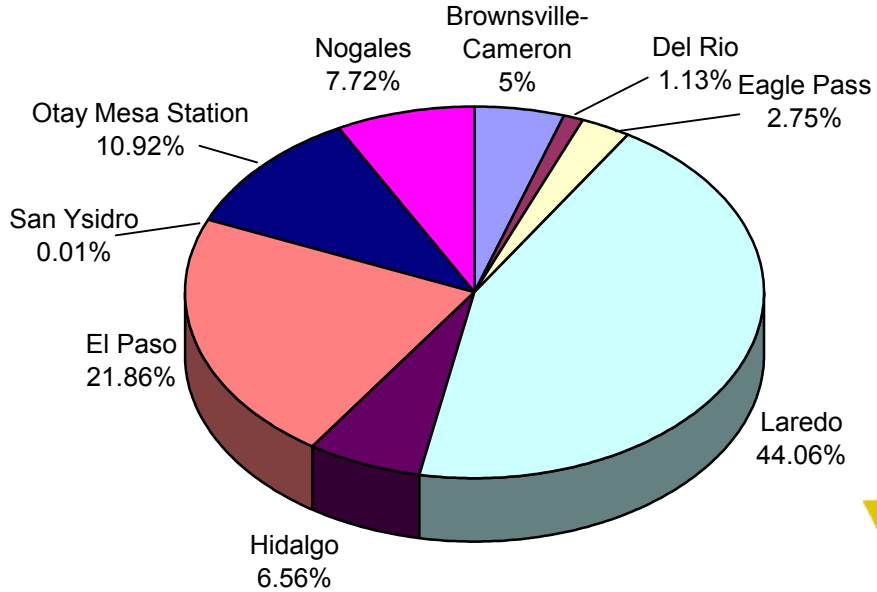
Some recent developments in the Mexican economy suggest that El Paso retailers may see an increase in sales. Although the Mexican economy is still rebounding from the major peso devaluation that sent it reeling in late 1994, the country has seen some improvements in financial stability over the past few years. Moreover, the emergence of the U.S. economy from recession later this year should help stimulate the maquilas, which in turn will have a positive impact on El Paso retail activity.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECTION

According to the Texas Department of Economic Development, Mexico continued to be Texas’ largest export market. Texas shipments to Mexico reached \$41.6 billion during 2001, accounting for 43.8 percent of total state exports. Computer and electronic products, transportation equipment and electrical equipment and appliances remain the leading Texas export sectors to customers south of the Border. Much of this traffic moves through El Paso, as the Bureau of Transportation Statistics reports that almost \$16 billion worth of exports to Mexico were shipped through El Paso ports during 2001.

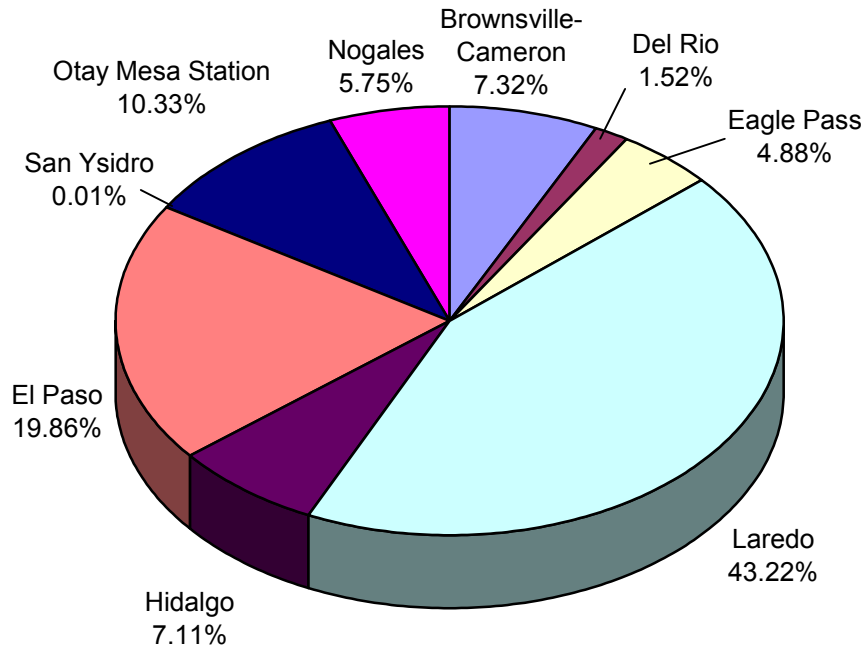
Imports through El Paso ports of entry have also remained strong with the value of imports at \$22.3 billion in 2001. The city is the third largest importer/exporter along the U.S.–Mexico border and is ranked in the top 25 metropolitan exporters.

## Imports from Mexico by Border City, 2001



Source: Texas Centers for Border Economic and Enterprise Development, Border Trade Data.

## Exports to Mexico by Border City, 2001



Source: Texas Centers for Border Economic and Enterprise Development, Border Trade Data.

## EL PASO EMPLOYERS

El Paso's economy has seen changes in recent years as new industries are arriving while other industries have left or reduced their impact in the City. Professional and business services have flourished in El Paso, as almost two-thirds of El Paso's net job creation from 1996 to 2001 was in the service sector. These industries accounted for 24.5 percent of the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area's workforce last year, compared to 20.6 percent five years ago. This trend is expected to continue. While employment in the public sector has dropped significantly over the last several years, ten of the top twenty employers are public entities.



### Top 20 Employers, Public and Private, in the City of El Paso.

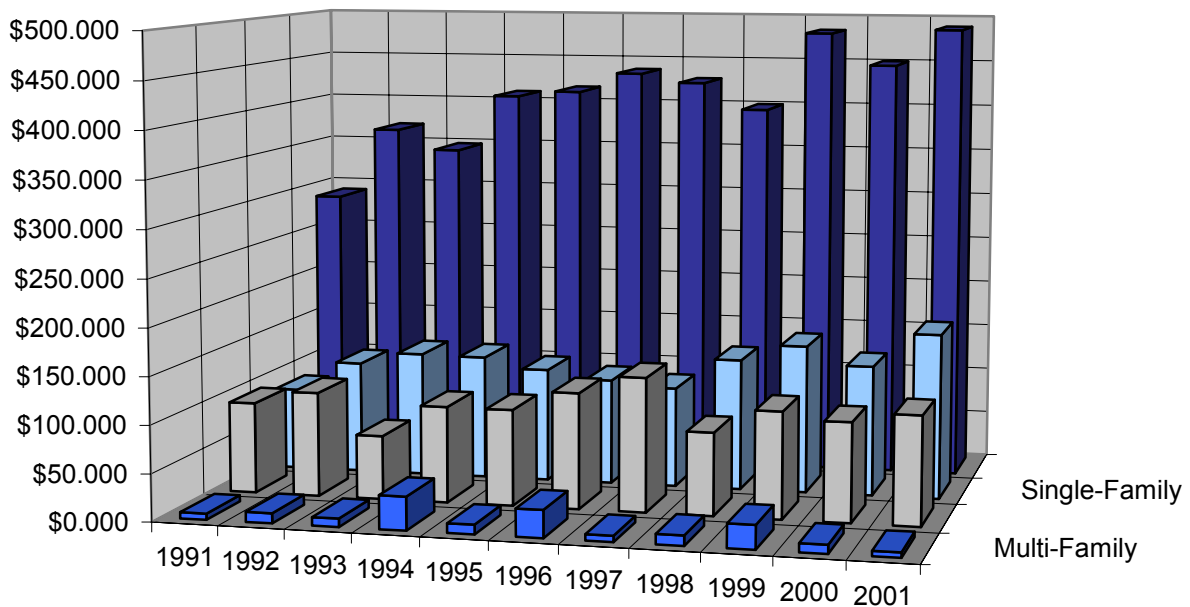
RANK	NAME OF EMPLOYER	NO. OF EMPLOYEES
1	EL PASO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT	8,463
2	YSLETA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT	7,025
3	FORT BLISS CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES	6,500
4	CITY OF EL PASO	5,457
5	SIERRA PROVIDENCE HEALTH NETWORK	4,200
6	EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE	3,770
7	THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO	3,686
8	WAL-MART	3,300
9	VF JEANSWEAR	3,200
10	SOCORRO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT	2,800
11	COUNTY OF EL PASO	2,500
12	DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (INS, BORDER PATROL, FBI & DEA)	2,116
13	ECHOSTAR SATELLITE CORP	2,007
14	STATE OF TEXAS (DHS, COMMUNITY MHMR, TxDOT, DPS, TWC & HEALTH)	1,917
15	MCI/GC SERVICES	1,852
16	EUREKA	1,700
17	THOMASON GENERAL HOSPITAL	1,700
18	DEL SOL MEDICAL CENTER	1,500
19	WEST TELESERVICES CORPORATION	1,200
20	PROVIDIAN FINANCIAL	1,100

Source: City  
of El Paso  
Office of  
Economic  
Development

## RESIDENTIAL, CONSTRUCTION & REAL ESTATE

Economic growth and low interest rates are stimulating demand for housing in El Paso. According to the Texas A&M Real Estate Research Center, local single-family building permits reached 3,317 last year, a gain of 15 percent from 2000. Similarly, the average price of a home sold rose from \$98,200 to \$105,200 over the same period, an increase of 7.1 percent.

**City of El Paso Construction Valuations  
1991 - 2001**



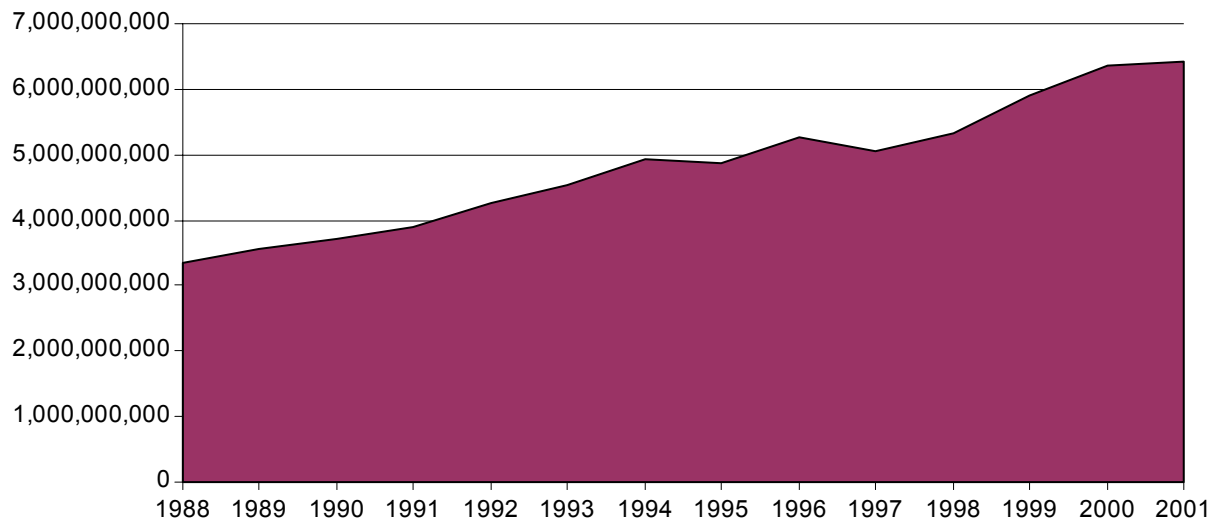
Source: Building Permits and Inspections, City of El Paso, Annual Construction Report, April 2002.

## RETAIL SALES

As noted by University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) economist Dr. Thomas Fullerton, metropolitan retail sales performance is usually “the most variable segment of a local or national economy.” In general, retail sales in El Paso have grown over the past 15 years. Setbacks in 1995 and 1997 are indicative of minor economic troubles in the border region. In 2001, El Paso reported almost \$6.4 billion in gross retail sales, \$70 million or 1.1 percent more than the previous year. Trends in retail sales will tend to follow personal income growth over time, although the presence of over one million potential customers from Ciudad Juarez gives a boost to local retail trade.

In the past five years, the retail categories in El Paso with the largest sales have been automotive dealers and service stations, food stores, general merchandise stores, and miscellaneous retail. As the regional economy recovers from the downturn, retail trade should accelerate.

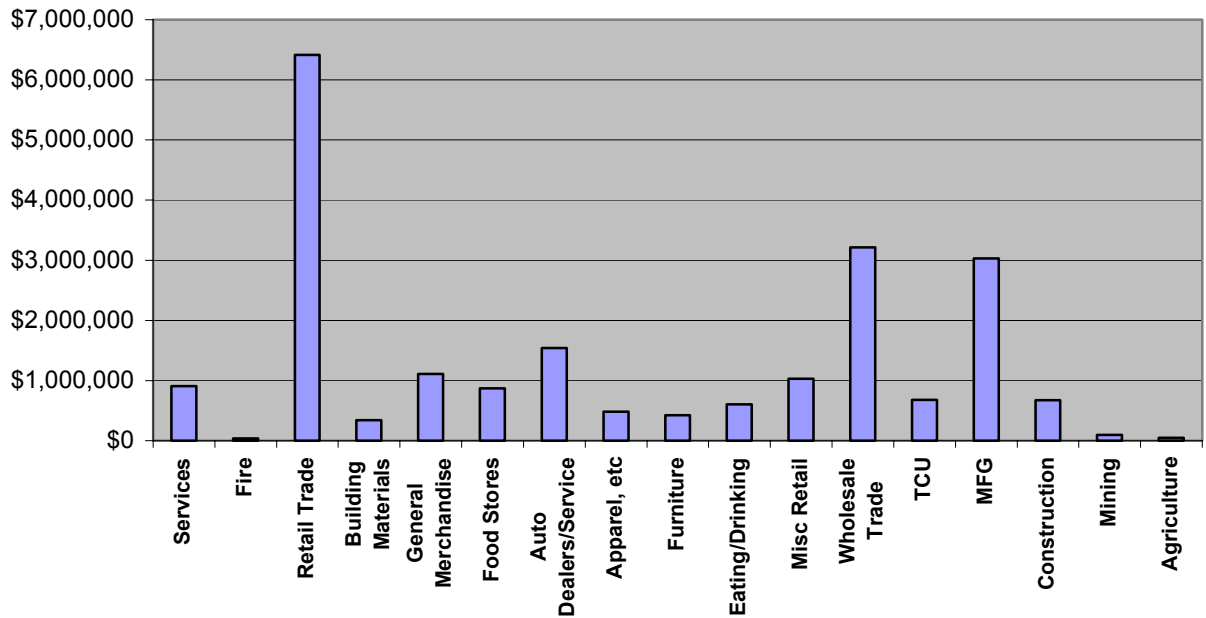
### El Paso Gross Retail Sales 1988-2001



Source: State of Texas, Comptroller of Public Accounts.

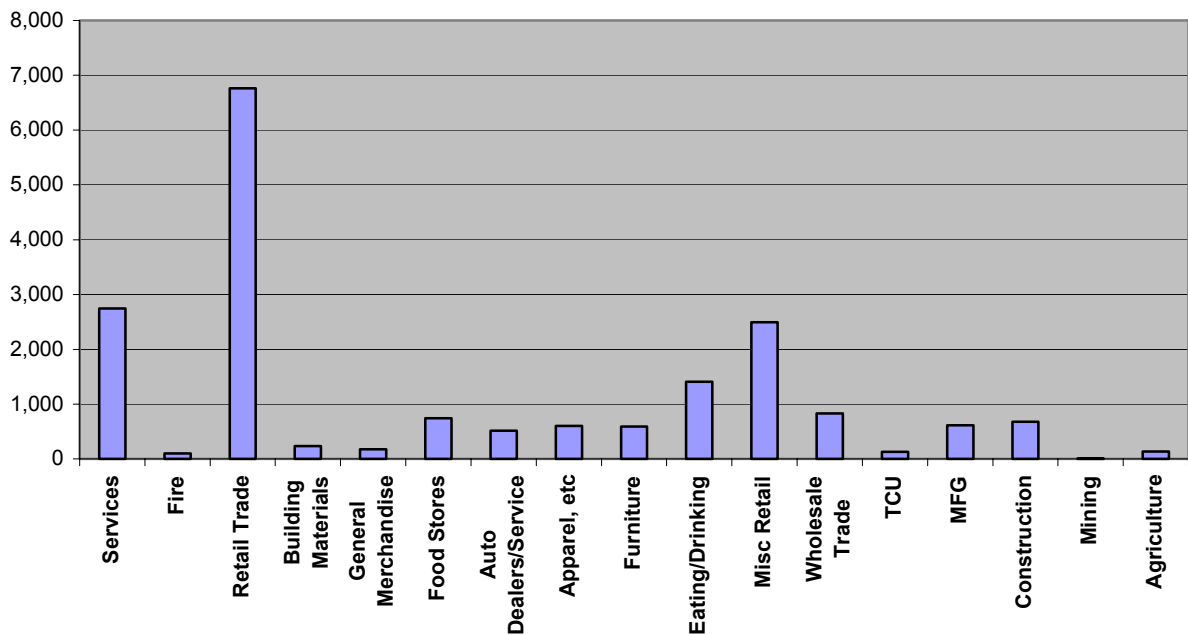
### El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area Retail Sales by Industry 2001

(x 1000)



Source: State of Texas, Comptroller of Public Accounts.

### El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area Number of Retail Outlets by Industry 2001



# PROPERTY TAX STRUCTURE FOR ENTITIES IN EL PASO COUNTY

The City of El Paso's Tax Office provides its clients with a consolidated property tax bill and collects taxes for 25 taxing jurisdictions within the City and County of El Paso, Texas. The city's per parcel cost of collection is \$0.43, the lowest fee in Texas. The City incorporates a unique financing arrangement in which the law firm contracted to collect delinquent property taxes makes a contribution to help defray the per parcel cost of tax collection.

***No Corporate or Personal Income Tax in Texas***

<b>2002 Property Tax Rates</b>	<b>\$/ \$100</b>
City of El Paso	0.719833
El Paso County	0.396610
Thomason General Hospital	0.185468
El Paso Community College	0.131389
El Paso Independent School District	1.571579
Ysleta Independent School District	1.555755
Socorro Independent School District	1.615500
Canutillo Independent School District	1.710000

<b>Total Tax Rates (First four entities plus one school district.)</b>	<b>\$/ \$100</b>
County, Hospital, EPCC, City of El Paso, Ysleta ISD	2.989055
County, Hospital, EPCC, City of El Paso, El Paso ISD	3.004879
County, Hospital, EPCC, City of El Paso, Canutillo ISD	3.143300
County, Hospital, EPCC, City of El Paso, Socorro ISD	3.048800

**\*\* These rates apply to land and improvement and are levied per \$100 of assessed value**

*Source: City of El Paso, October 2001.*





## SALES AND USE TAX

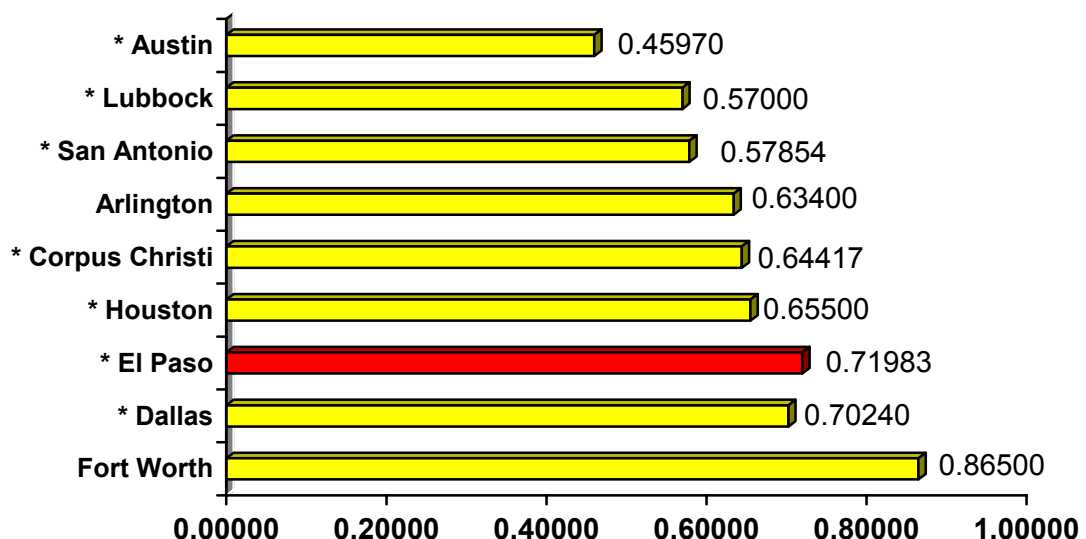
State Sales Tax	6.25%
Municipal - City of El Paso	1.00%
County - El Paso County	0.50%
Municipal Transit - Sun City Area Transit Tax	0.50%
Total El Paso Sales and Use Tax	8.25%
State Motor Fuels Tax	\$0.20/gallon
State & City Hotel/Motel Tax	15.5%
State Motor Vehicle Tax	6.25%
<i>(Includes sales tax, rental tax, and interstate motor carriers tax)</i>	

## TAX RATE COMPARISON


### Texas Cities Tax Rate Comparison

(Cents per \$100 Valuation)

\*Cities with FY2003 Proposed Rate; Otherwise Adopted FY 2002 Rate Shown




## THE CULTURE




The best of two nations and three states converge at the westernmost tip of Texas in El Paso. A warm and friendly mosaic of cultures, traditions, and ethnic groups are nestled against the rugged Franklin Mountains and along the Rio Grande. This diversity places El Paso at the forefront of communities transcending borders—a truly global culture right in our own backyard.

The City of El Paso's heritage is unlike any other with our ancestry deriving from many sources. The Spanish explorer Don Juan de Oñate and the Franciscan monks who accompanied this conquistador on his journey to settle the limits of the Spanish colonial frontier discovered the area. The settlement of the El Paso del Norte region led to further colonization, the establishment of Spanish missions, and the introduction of Christianity to the indigenous population. The Spanish cultural influence remains alive to this day in the form of our City's architecture, language, customs, and traditions.



The colonial territory of Mexico, which included El Paso, gained independence from Spain in 1821 and established itself as a military and economic power with great influence upon this region. Along with the rise of Mexico came the prominence of the Mestizo culture, a cross of European and indigenous civilizations, which left its imprint on El Paso. The Mestizos have made significant and distinctive contributions to our community in art, literature, music, and cuisine while continuing many traditions of our Spanish founders.

The state of Texas, newly admitted to the union in 1845, facilitated the movement to settle the west and brought Americans of all walks of life to El Paso; some just passed through while others settled and prospered. The expansion westward brought new industries to El Paso from ranching and dairy farming to the production of pima cotton and pecans. This dramatic growth brought forth people who sought new beginnings and prosperity, and helped to create our frontier spirit and cowboy heritage adding yet another powerful influence to our varied cultural milieu.



The 20<sup>th</sup> Century has exhibited a solidification of our many cultural attributes as they have blended seamlessly to create a community that is uniquely American. Our citizens are imbued with a pioneering spirit looking to the future and all its grand possibilities yet, remembering our rich history. This unique synergy of perspectives and ideals has propelled our city to ever-greater success and prosperity. From our centuries old Spanish missions and Tex-Mex cuisine to our frontier spirit, this eclectic mix of ideas and traditions weave a cultural tapestry unique to El Paso, and has forged our outlook for a bright and exciting future as the City of the "New Old West" in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**W**ater conservation, clean air and waste reclamation are issues that have an impact on every growing U.S. city. In El Paso, new and innovative solutions to protect the environment are being developed. Groups like the Joint Advisory Committee and the Paso del Norte Air Quality Task Force are working to devise and adopt standards in both the U.S. and Mexico to assure air quality in the future. The International Boundary and Water Commission is forming partnerships with the University of Texas at El Paso's (UTEP) Center for Environmental Resource Management (CERM) to guarantee a clean, safe water supply into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. In addition, the Rio Grande Council of Governments, in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency, has begun a Brownfields Reclamation Project to encourage redevelopment of former commercial and industrial sites. By removing liability barriers, developing partnerships with stake holders, exploring financing options for redevelopment, and promoting workforce development and job training initiatives, they hope to promote reclamation of previously used commercial and industrial locations.

## THE CLIMATE

**T**he sun shines 302 days per year in El Paso, 83 percent of daylight hours, according to the El Paso Weather Bureau. Low humidity and moderate rainfall combine to create a mild, year-round climate exclusive to the region. Along with a long summer full of entertaining recreational and cultural events, El Pasoans enjoy the flexibility of attending many outdoor exhibitions, concerts, and sporting events well into the winter months. In fact, El Paso's short winters provide numerous recreational opportunities throughout the year.

*Source: U.S. National Weather Services, El Paso Weather Bureau*





## AVERAGE SEASONAL TEMPERATURES IN EL PASO (Temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit)

Month	Avg. Temperature	Avg. Low	Avg. High	Avg. Rainfall
January	42.8	29.4	56.1	0.44 in.
February	48.1	33.9	62.2	0.41 in.
March	55.1	40.2	69.9	0.33 in.
April	63.4	48.0	78.7	0.25 in.
May	71.8	56.5	87.1	0.37 in.
June	80.4	64.3	96.5	0.65 in.
July	82.3	68.4	96.1	1.60 in.
August	80.1	66.6	93.5	1.50 in.
September	74.4	61.6	87.1	1.30 in.
October	64.0	49.6	78.4	0.69 in.
November	52.4	38.4	66.4	0.40 in.
December	44.0	30.6	57.7	0.50 in.
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>63.3</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>77.5</b>	<b>8.81 in.</b>



## CRIME RATE

**E**l Paso's overall crime rate has dropped seven of the past nine years, despite the nearly 10 percent growth that the City has experienced in that time. In 2001, the ratio of crimes reported was 5.3 percent. El Paso's crime rate has dropped to the lowest it has been in more than 20 years. There are 16 community action groups that employ a neighborhood approach to preventing crime in El Paso. The city's reduction in crime has been attributed to the task forces that target gang activity, domestic violence, auto theft and drug trafficking organizations. The Morgan Quitno Research Company also selected El Paso as the third safest city with a population exceeding 500,000 for four years in a row. The Christian Science Monitor rated El Paso as having the lowest homicide rate and second-lowest rate of robberies of any major city in the U.S. (population of 450,000 or more) in 2000.

*Source: City of El Paso, Police Department*

## HIGHER EDUCATION

As the second oldest academic institution in the University of Texas system, the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) was founded in 1913. The University's academic structure consists of six colleges and ten doctoral programs. The 366-acre campus enrolls an average of over 16,000 students per academic year. UTEP has been designated as an "Intensive - doctoral / research university" by the Carnegie Foundation. UTEP is nationally recognized for the excellent research opportunities it provides to both graduate and undergraduate students.

Source: UTEP web page: [www.utep.edu](http://www.utep.edu)



El Paso Community College is one of the largest comprehensive community colleges in the nation. With a total enrollment of over 20,000 credit and 8,000 non-credit students each semester, and over 130 programs of study, the El Paso Community College is a leader in bringing valuable educational opportunities to the residents of El Paso.

Source: El Paso Community College



Founded in 1888, New Mexico State University (NMSU), located in nearby Las Cruces, New Mexico, provides an additional higher education option for area residents. NMSU offers a full spectrum of Bachelors and Masters degree programs plus 24 doctoral programs. The University has been nationally recognized as an "Extensive - doctoral/research university" by the Carnegie Foundation, that organization's top designation. NMSU is regarded as one of the top universities for minority students. NMSU offers in-state tuition to residents of several Texas border counties including El Paso, County.

Source: NMSU web page: [www.nmsu.edu](http://www.nmsu.edu)

The University of Phoenix, Webster University, Park University at Fort Bliss, Texas, and other sites in the region offer more than 30 technical and career training facilities.

## ELECTRICITY

Electric power is provided by the El Paso Electric Company, which also supplies electricity to southern New Mexico and other points in West Texas. El Paso Electric has ensured the availability of electricity to its customers by acquiring a portion of Arizona's Palo Verde Nuclear Generation Station, while also relying on coal generated power from New Mexico.

## WATER AND SEWER SERVICE

The El Paso Public Service Board administers water supply and sewage. Although current water supplies, obtained from a combination of the Hueco Bolson and the Rio Grande River, are adequate for the anticipated growth of the city into the 21st century, the Public Service Board is implementing a detailed plan aimed at providing a reliable supply of fresh water for the next 100 years. Water conservation is practiced throughout the year. One example of these efforts is the implementation of even/odd watering days for residents in which even numbered addresses can only water their lawns on Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday, and odd numbered addresses water on Wednesday, Friday or Sunday. As a result of these and other conservation measures, the city's water usage has remained constant despite an increase in the water demand.

## TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AND POINTS OF LOCAL INTEREST

### **Amigo Airsho**

Held at Biggs Army Airfield in October, this air show is recognized as one of the nation's best. Military and civilian aircraft, static displays, live entertainment, and performances by world-renowned flying teams make the Amigo Airsho a highly anticipated event each year. For more information contact 915-545-2864.

### **Chamizal National Memorial**

The memorial was established in recognition of the amicable resolution of a dispute between the United States and Mexico over this section of the borderland in 1963. Included are a 55-acre park, a museum, the Los Paisanos Gallery, an outdoor amphitheater, and a 500-seat theater. Several festivals are held each year that reflect the theme of the memorial at 800 S. San Marcial St. Call 915-532-7273.

### **El Paso Museum of Art**

In its new downtown location adjacent to the Arts Festival Plaza, the museum is home of the famous Kress Collection. In addition, the museum includes the Tom Lea Gallery, the DeWetter Gallery and the Contemporary Gallery, featuring changing exhibits throughout the year. An amphitheater, library and classrooms are also housed in the facility. Additionally, this year, our museum will feature the Renoir Exhibit. For more information, call 915-532-1707.

### **El Paso Symphony Orchestra**

The El Paso Symphony Orchestra is a popular attraction every year. The talented members of the orchestra, the fabulous guest artists, and superb musical direction make the concert season a must-see. For more information, call 915-532-3776.

- El Paso Zoo** The El Paso Zoo is an eighteen-acre complex that is home to more than 600 animals of 175 species in a variety of natural habitat exhibits including a Reptile House, American Biome, Americas Aviary, Paraje, Birds of Prey, Forest Atrium, Asian Grasslands, Asian Endangered Walk, and an Elephant Complex. The Zoo is a member of the Species Survival Plan (SSP), an international cooperative captive management program for endangered species, and is an accredited member of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA). For more information, call 915-544-1928.
- Franklin Mountains State Park** The Franklin Mountains State Park lies on Transmountain Road, a route that cuts through the mountain range and connects northeast El Paso with the northwest part of the city. There are many places to stop and enjoy the desert vista, and trails make it ideal for hiking and picnicking.
- Hueco Tanks State Park** This area derives its name from the huge basin-shaped rocks that catch and hold rain. The park features world-class rock climbing, hiking, picnicking and camping, as well as cave paintings that date back as far as 1500 B.C. It is located twenty miles east of El Paso on Highway 62. For more information, call 915-857-1135.
- Indian Cliffs Ranch** At this landmark situated on El Paso's eastern frontier, you can see Texas longhorns, buffalo, deer, Belgian team horses, and many other animals. The ranch also features an Indian maze, movie sets, the Fort Apache Playground, free hay rides every Sunday, and the world famous Cattleman's Steakhouse. Admission is free for restaurant guests. Located 35 minutes from downtown, I-10 East Exit 49. Call 915-544-3200.
- Insights Museum** A world of hands-on learning experiences where more than 80 hands-on science and technology exhibits offer fun and facts for all ages. Located in Downtown El Paso. For more information call 915-534-0000.
- Juárez, Mexico** Located just across the border, the Old City Market in downtown Juárez, the nearby Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Mission, and the Cuauhtemoc Market attract tourists from all over the Southwest each year. The history of the city is illustrated in the old churches and missions, and the Museo Archaologico provides other links to past. Restaurants and shops abound in the city to match any taste. Trolley tours are available from El Paso and depart regularly from the Civic Center.
- Los Murales** El Paso's Museum without walls touches the lives of hundreds of thousands of people each day by celebrating the history and heritage of our community. The Los Murales Project, a partnership between the Junior League of El Paso and area artists, funds the creation and restoration of murals throughout the city while educating the public and providing support to local muralists. A guidebook, *An Art of Conscience*, provides specific mural locations and information.



<b>Magoffin Home State Park</b>	The Magoffin Home, built in 1875 by pioneer Joseph Magoffin, is El Paso's only historic house museum. The nineteen room, adobe home is a prime example of Territorial style architecture, a style that emerged in the southwest in the mid 1800s. For more information, call 1-800-792-1112.
<b>The Mission Trail</b>	Follow in the footsteps of Don Juan de Oñate. Among the oldest roads in the country, the Mission Trail is rooted in history dating back more than 400 years. There are three missions to visit, including the oldest building in Texas.
<b>Parque Chamizal, Juárez</b>	Located directly across the Rio Grande from El Paso's Chamizal National Monument, this park sits atop the portion of land ceded to Mexico in the boundary settlement of 1963. Gardens, a statuary, and several architectural attractions can be found at the park.
<b>Wells Fargo Sun Bowl</b>	At high noon on New Year's Eve, El Paso proudly hosts the Wells Fargo Sun Bowl. First played in 1935, this post-season classic pits two nationally acclaimed NCAA Division I football teams in a head-to-head classic college football competition. Over the years many football legends have played or coached in the game, including Tony Dorsett, Merlin Olsen, Burt Reynolds, Johnny Majors, and Barry Sanders.
<b>Sunland Park Casino and Racetrack</b>	Located in Sunland Park, New Mexico (adjacent to the west side of El Paso), this racetrack offers the thrill of horse racing and paramutual betting in addition to casino gambling. For more information, call 505-589-1131.
<b>Tigua Indian Cultural Center</b>	Observe the cultural traditions of the Tigua Indian Tribe at the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo. Witness ancient Tigua chants and dances on the plaza, and relive more than 350 years of pueblo history at the museum. A gift shop and the Cique Restaurant are also located on the premises just three quarters of a mile from the historic Ysleta Mission at 9430 Socorro Road. Call 915-859-5287 for more information.
<b>Viva! El Paso</b>	Depicting the history of the El Paso region, the colorful musical drama is played at the stunning McKelligon Canyon Amphitheater, where the backdrop of the stage is a dramatic mountain cliff. Performances are Thursday through Saturday in June, July, and August. McKelligon Canyon is also home to "Shakespeare on the Rocks" in the fall. For more information, call 915-565-6900.
<b>Western Playland</b>	Located in Ascarate Park in El Paso, Western Playland has rides for kids of all ages. Experience thrilling roller coasters, water slides, trains, rides, go-carts, and more in a well maintained and exceptionally clean park. Open weekends in the spring and fall and Wednesday through Sunday in the summer. For more information call 915-772-3914.



### **Wyller Aerial Tramway**

The tramway was originally built in 1959 to carry KTSM employees to the broadcast tower at the top of the Franklin Mountains. Recently reopened to the public and operated by Texas Parks Department, the tram is a four-minute ride to the 5,632-foot Ranger Peak. Observers can scan hundreds of miles of the far west corners of the Lone Star State as well as Old and New Mexico. Call 915-566-6622.

## **SPECTATOR SPORTS**

### **Collegiate Sports**

The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Miners: Football, Men's and Women's Basketball, Soccer, Track and Field, Cross Country, Tennis, Volleyball.

#### **Professional Baseball**

El Paso is home to the El Paso Diablos, one of the top minor league baseball teams in the country. The Diablos, a AA team affiliated with the Arizona Diamondbacks, have provided an exciting brand of family entertainment in El Paso since the 1974 season. Cohen Stadium, located in northeast El Paso, holds up to 10,000 for baseball, and is one of the most fan-friendly parks in the country. For more information call 915-755-2000.

#### **Polo**

Often referred to as the sport of kings, polo can be played at the Tarahumara Polo Club in La Union, New Mexico, approximately 20 minutes from northwest El Paso. Games are played nearly every weekend between May and September and are open to the public. Call 505-589-7000 for more information.

#### **Professional Ice Hockey**

El Paso Buzzards, a Western Professional Hockey League Team, and two-time President's Cup Champions. For more information call 915-581-6666.

#### **Professional Soccer**

The El Paso Patriots Soccer Team, a USISL select division professional soccer organization since 1990. For more information call 915-771-6620.

#### **Rugby**

El Paso Scorpions Rugby Team. For information, call 845-7825.

